

**Celebrate Getting Satisfied: *House Party Discussion Guide***

*By Katherine Hauswirth*

*Advisors: Michael Beck, Stan King, Maria Hodkins*

**Get Satisfied: How Twenty People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough** is a reason to celebrate. The book is a unique collection of twenty voices, twenty perspectives on balance in a complex world. As Peter Whybrow notes in the book's foreword, *personal identity and self-fulfillment emerge through individual experience in communion with others.*

That's where your House Party comes in.

Use this guide to plan a gathering, an event that combines the joy of companionship and relaxation with some important, much-needed discussion of what it takes to get satisfied in today's fast-paced, often materially-driven world.

As the authors of **Get Satisfied** illustrate, there are many paths to finding personal satisfaction. And there are many paths to a successful House Party, too! Don't feel you have to follow the guide step by step. Choose what works best for you, as the host, and for your particular group of guests. We also appreciate that some folks who signed up as a House Party contact may not have the time to be this proactive in the House Party process. Some may be on the list as a local contact for others' initiatives, or may simply prefer a different style of activity. We want to thank all participants for their time and commitment.

Have fun with your house party! All of the guests already have something in common: the desire to find *the satisfaction of enough*. It is a topic that does not get discussed very often, and here, finally, is an opportunity to exchange ideas on issues that really matter to you and your guests.

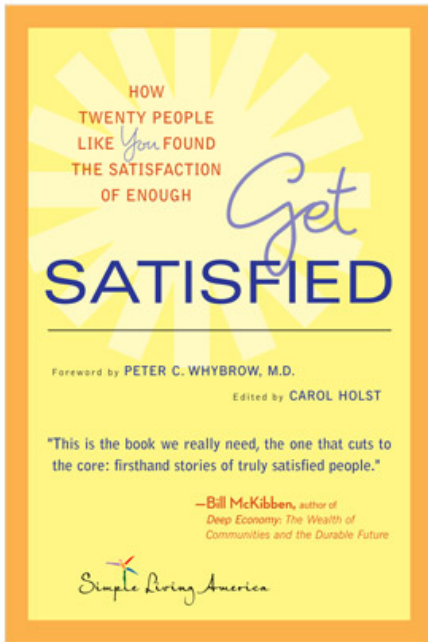
Furthermore, here's a chance to *connect* – through Simple Living America (SLA) and its nationwide network of like-minded folks – with a wave of the future – the growing *Satisfaction Movement*.

## Table of Contents

Planning Your House Party	4
A Menu of Invitation Ideas	5
Food and Ambience: <i>Welcoming Your Guests</i>	6
Party Time: <i>Encouraging Community and Discussion</i>	7
Ice Breakers	8
Getting into <u><i>Get Satisfied</i></u>	9
Wrapping up Your Party: <i>Send Them Home Satisfied!</i>	10
Appendix A: Information on SLA Membership	11
Appendix B: Talking Points	12
Appendix C: Draft Simple Living Measurement Scale	13
Appendix D: Personal Story Summaries and Discussion Starters	15
Appendix E: Suggested House Party Checklist	20

## Planning Your House Party

Your House Party plans have great potential. Your gathering can move well beyond a book discussion— to a *life* discussion! However, both book discussions and life discussions can sound heavy and intimidating (or at the very least boring!) at first.



It is important to frame your event attractively for your guests whenever possible! Keep the tone upbeat and light by highlighting these engaging aspects:

- Good food
- Good fun
- Stimulating discussion
- Great sense of community

Some suggestions for invitation language are provided below. Mix and match what works for you, or come up with your own unique message. You might want to use an image of the book's cover, or include some images that relate to the invitation language you choose. For example, one of the suggested blurbs talks about a popular slogan. How about a picture of a car bumper with that slogan across it, or another quote or slogan that fits your theme? Some of the suggested invitation blurbs also

suggest bringing a favorite dish or CD. Play up your music or food themes to generate some buzz about your unique party.

Before you draw up your invitation, you will want to decide how you will integrate the book itself into the House Party. It will help to have your own copy, of course, and consider having extra copies available to lend to guests. Guests may also want to buy copies of the book, and should consider SLA membership, as the benefits include:

- Half price on books
- Membership in a national organization spearheading a 'Satisfaction Movement'
- Quarterly email newsletter

Potential SLA members can visit this link for further information: <http://www.getsatisfied.org> (click "Join" under "About SLA"). Appendix A also contains membership information from the Web site.

## A Menu of Invitation Ideas

---

**Get Satisfied: *How Twenty People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough*** is a reason to celebrate. The book is a unique collection of twenty voices, twenty perspectives on balance in a complex world—something we can all relate to!

Please join me at my house party for a chance to unwind, eat some good food, hear more about the book, and exchange some ideas on feeling satisfied in today's fast-paced and demanding world.

---

Have you measured your sense of satisfaction lately? Is your life too demanding?  
Too complicated?

Simple Living America has just released **Get Satisfied: *How Twenty People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough***. The book, a unique collection of twenty perspectives on balance in a complex world, is reason to celebrate.

Please join me at my **Get Satisfied** House Party for food, fun, and the chance to explore simplicity and the satisfaction of enough.

---

GET SATISFIED!!

With good food, good fun, and good company at my **Get Satisfied** House Party.

Bill McKibben has called the new book **Get Satisfied: *How Twenty People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough*** 'the book we really need, the one that cuts to the core: firsthand stories of truly satisfied people.'

My party will introduce the book and give people a chance to chat about its much-needed insights. Move a step closer to finding satisfaction in today's complex and demanding world.

PS: Please bring a CD of the music you find *most satisfying*, in keeping with the party's theme.

---

---

Come for the food, stay for the *food for thought!*

Please come to my **Get Satisfied** House Party, a celebration of the new book **Get Satisfied: *How Twenty People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough.***

- Find out what you and your neighbors think of the Simple Living Measurement Scale
- Meet some like-minded people
- Hear about the many approaches to seeking and finding satisfaction in today's stressful world
- Did I mention the great food?

PS: In keeping with the theme, please bring a dish that is satisfying but also simple to prepare.

---

*He who ends with the most toys wins* became a popular bumper sticker slogan during the 1980s, and it can still be found bouncing down many highways.

A slogan more fitting for today might be *He who ends with the most insight wins peace and satisfaction.*

The book **Get Satisfied: *How Twenty People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough*** is an antidote to our culture's overstuffed, greed is good, more is better mentality. Ed Begley, Jr, calls the book '*a relief for our maxed-out lives and for our maxed-out planet!*'.

Come to my **Get Satisfied** House Party and experience the relief, the fun, and the satisfaction of enough! Enjoy the food, the fun, and the great mix of people. Learn more about the book.

---

### **Food and Ambience: *Welcoming Your Guests***

Once you have mailed, faxed, or e-mailed your invitations, think about how to create a truly simple, low-fuss, nondistracting environment and menu that will produce a welcoming experience. This is not like other parties, which often revolve around impressing others (with expense, with glitz, with gourmet feasts). Try to set a great example by *not* breaking a sweat during your preparations.

If you want to do something with décor, consider going minimalist. This might mean a few well-placed vases, each with a single, stunning flower; a refreshing lack of *tchatzkahs* (Yiddish for knick-knacks!); or showcasing your great outdoor view instead of decorating your indoor landscape.

Great party hosts will tell you NOT to go minimalist on the food—at least not the *amount!* Good food and drink will make your guests feel comfortable, well sated, and ready for an exchange of ideas. Keep the setup casual: buffet style with plenty of seating will allow people to mingle and be comfortable.

Here are some food options to consider:

- Pot luck! One of the suggested invitation blurbs above asks guests to bring satisfying but simple-to-prepare dishes. This can be a great vehicle for discussing your theme.
- Take-out ethnic food can eliminate cooking and storage worries and free you up to mingle. Consider combining this with the pot luck idea (each guest can bring their favorite takeout dish)
- A vegetarian smorgasbord
- One-pot dishes (eg, crock pot rice and beans, chili, or stroganoff)
- If your party is between meal times, consider a variety of finger foods (just be sure your guests don't arrive expecting a meal!):

-Sliced vegetables  
and fruits

-Sliced cheese

-Olives

-Chips and dip

-Nuts

-Mini-sandwiches with  
cheese and deli meat

- Dessert and coffee, or wine/cheese, are always appealing options, too

Set a welcoming mood by choosing music that fits the personality of your group. Classical music is usually soothing, but you may want to try songs that recall a simpler time, and/or the era of your guests' youth (when, often, everything seemed simpler or more satisfying). As in one of the example invitations above, consider asking guests to bring their most satisfying music selections—another great vehicle for discussing what is satisfying to them personally!

### **Party Time: *Encouraging Community and Discussion***

Your party has the ultimate goal of encouraging discussion about life satisfaction. But first allow your guests to mingle and enjoy some food and drink (enjoying some satisfaction *in the moment!*). Play the music you have chosen (or the satisfying selections your guests brought with them). Circulate and make introductions as needed.

It will be helpful to have some copies of the ***Get Satisfied*** book around, and you might want to create a handout that contains some key, thought-provoking quotes from the book. Some basic questions may arise about the book—see Appendix B for some talking points on ***Get Satisfied***. Appendix A contains information on SLA membership (which includes half price on books).

## Ice Breakers

Most crowds need an ice breaker, especially when there's an effort towards discussion afoot. Here are some ideas to get your group moving in the right direction. Consider assigning a scribe(s) to write down meaningful ideas and observations that come up as your discussion evolves:

- If your guests were asked to bring a simple and satisfying dish, conduct an informal survey about which dishes appealed to their ideas on simple and satisfying fare, using the opportunity to discuss what constitutes "simple" and "satisfying".
- If guests were asked to contribute satisfying music to the party, poll your guests as described in the bullet above.
- Provide your guests with a brief history of **Get Satisfied** and the ideas behind it. Here is some text paraphrased from Carol Holst's introduction (see book) to get you started: *Simple Living America, a nonprofit membership organization, figured that there must be a few people out there who have found the satisfaction of enough in our culture and who would like to share their stories. They put out a national call for submissions to the book, and got an enormous response. They selected eleven women and nine men across the country, ranging in age from the twenties through the seventies. All are superb writers and all have compelling stories from the perspective of the general public. Whether they've chosen to be satisfied with a little or a lot, they are all wealthy in their contentment.* Use the talking points for the book (see Appendix B) as needed.
- Pass a hat filled with slips for word association. Ask each guest to provide their first thought related to the word(s) they draw. Example words: *satisfaction, simplicity, relief, peace, overscheduling, multitasking, stress, saying no, saying yes, debt, status, shopping, community, laughter, nature, decisions, priorities, the media, the holidays, commercialism, poverty, the environment, making a difference, pressure, friendship, balance, etc.*
- Ask each guest to recount a time when they thought more would be enough but it wasn't and conversely a time when they thought something would not be enough but it turned out to be plenty.
- Distribute questions from the Draft Simple Living Measurement Scale (see Appendix C). Provide some information on how and why it was developed: *In 2006, Simple Living America began a research study with Kirk Warren Brown, PhD, and his team at Virginia Commonwealth University's psychology department to scientifically build the first simple living measurement scale for the general public, based upon this working definition: substantially free of detractions from fulfillment and sufficiency—the satisfaction of enough.* (text paraphrased from Carol Holst's introduction to the book). Have guests choose a question from the scale and describe how that idea captures the satisfaction of enough for them personally.

## Getting into Get Satisfied

Once your group has warmed up, move into some deeper discussion on getting satisfied.

Choose a chapter from the **Get Satisfied** book. Consider reading it (or part of it) aloud yourself. If you ask for volunteers to read, be sure the guests you ask are comfortable in this role.

Even the initial act of choosing an appealing chapter can be a good exercise. Here are some ideas for choosing a chapter:

- Use the questions/comments your group has raised so far as a guide
- Choose a theme using one of the 5 subsections in the book:
  - Resolving Dramatic Challenges
  - Discovering the Sanity Within
  - “Unstuffing” One’s Life
  - The Wonderment of Enough
  - Cruising to Satisfaction
- Choose by author age, location, or gender (see book’s Table of Contents)
- Choose from a list of quotes you have compiled from the book
  - Further quotes from the twenty personal stories are available at the end of each author’s profile at:

[http://www.getsatisfied.org/main/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=26](http://www.getsatisfied.org/main/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=26) (just click “About the Authors” under “About the Book”)

Use Appendix D, which summarizes and offers a few leading questions or quotes for each story, to help you delve further into your book discussion.

Also be sure to visit Appendix E, which contains a handy checklist that can help plan your house party.

## Wrapping up Your House Party: *Send them Home Satisfied!*

Ideas for wrapping up your party:

- Read from the scribe's list of key thoughts/ideas/observations
- Ask each guest to name the most interesting or compelling idea that was shared or generated
- Ask each guest to describe an aspect of their life that is satisfying and post it when they get home at [www.getsatisfied.org](http://www.getsatisfied.org) - just click "Post Your Stories"
- Ask each guest to name an area where they want to seek more satisfaction (and post per above)
- If your guests are enthused about their House Party experience, strike while the iron is hot—plan for future activities!
  - Pick a date and plan another ***Get Satisfied House Party***. One of your guests may want to host next time, and it might be helpful to poll the group on what worked best, what different approaches might be fun
  - Choose a chapter(s) for some follow-up book discussions and set a date for the next get-together
  - Consider a ***Get Satisfied*** e-mail discussion/support group

Congratulations on hosting a Get Satisfied House Party, celebrating a book and a mindset whose time has come. As Carol Holst's introduction of the **Get Satisfied** book says, *Balance in a complex world is a mainstream rallying cry and there are few who don't yearn for it*. Commend yourself on striving for balance and satisfaction, and for inviting others to share your journey.

## Appendix A: Information on SLA Membership including 50% Discount on the Book

From <http://www.getsatisfied.org> (click "Join" under "About SLA")

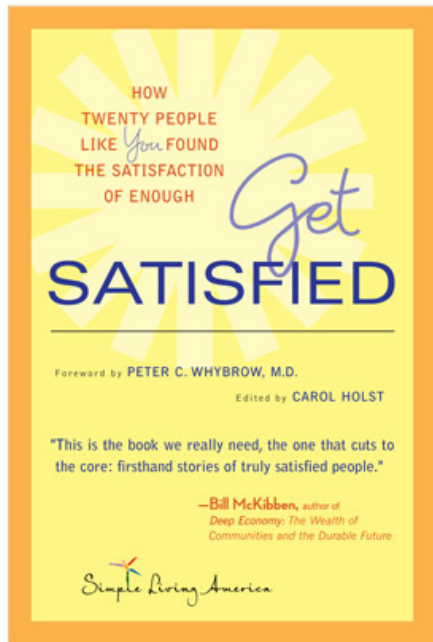
Join Simple Living America to foster balance and fulfillment in a complex world! Your membership fee helps support the expenses associated with Simple Living America's house parties program, simplicity measurement research, conferences, member benefits, public education and other volunteer services. Members receive a 50% discount on *GET SATISFIED: How Twenty People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough*. They also receive free "I simplify" post-it notepads from recycled materials and our quarterly online newsletter. In addition, Sustainer level members can request the third season of *Simple Living with Wanda Urbanska* (8 DVD programs) as a special thank-you gift.

Your membership at the **\$25 Simplifier** or **\$100 Sustainer level**, plus any extra donation, is fully tax-deductible. Your name and information will not be sold or exchanged. Simple Living America's annual member cycle is June 1 to May 31 the following year. Memberships received after March 1 will be credited in full for the next calendar year. Join today! Those who prefer to join without using PayPal are welcome to send their contact information with a check in U.S. funds payable to SLA-CRESP to Simple Living America, P.O. Box 9955, Glendale, CA 91226, U.S.A.

## Appendix B: A FEW TALKING POINTS WHEN SPEAKING ABOUT THE BOOK (in addition to your own)

1. Filled with compelling personal stories of true satisfaction, the book is being published in early October 2007 by Easton Studio Press for Simple Living America.

2. According to celebrity Ed Begley, Jr., *GET SATISFIED* heralds a satisfaction movement in this country, long overdue.



3. Every path to 'the satisfaction of enough' is unique and brings fulfillment, not deprivation. Each person has a different take on what's right at any particular time.

4. The book is available to Simple Living America members for a 50% discount at [www.getsatisfied.org](http://www.getsatisfied.org). Pre-orders are encouraged.

5. Please join Simple Living America to help build this movement in the mainstream and advance the book. SLA is the first national, nonprofit membership organization for the general public centered on simplicity, which we are broadly defining in lay terms as 'the satisfaction of enough.' (The academic definition upon which this is based can be found online at [www.getsatisfied.org](http://www.getsatisfied.org).)

6. Simple Living America is part of the CRESP Center for Transformative Action at Cornell University and is partnered with the *Simple Living with Wanda Urbanska* national public television series, now in its fourth season of production.

7. The book and this field include prominent scientific voices, such as the foreword by Peter C. Whybrow, M.D., Director of UCLA's Semel Institute for Neuroscience & Human Behavior and author of *American Mania: When More Is Not Enough*. See [www.getsatisfied.org](http://www.getsatisfied.org) for other ways that we are working with scientists.

8. The book will be available prior to this year's November/December holiday season. Its message, 'the satisfaction of enough,' will be exactly what many are seeking to help moderate the overload and commercialism often experienced at this time. For those giving holiday gifts, it's a perfect choice.

9. We are publishing this book according to principles of "enough." We are not printing to waste copies, unlike most contemporary books. Stores like Barnes & Noble will stock it upon request, but we aren't joining in the materialistic frenzy of the book distribution machinery. We prefer to print smaller quantities and connect to readers directly so we do not have books damaged in the selling and overstock returning process.

**Appendix C**  
**DRAFT**

**Simple Living Measurement Scale**

	Very Untrue	Somewhat Untrue	Slightly Untrue	Slightly True	Somewhat True	Very True
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. My core values are at the forefront of my thinking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I have good relationships with my family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I live in ways that reduce the distractions in my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I like to conserve the natural resources I use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I have a good balance of work and play in my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. It feels like I have too many belongings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I have a sense of community in my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. It's easy to figure out what is important to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I have good relationships with my friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I am mindful about the activities I add to my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I don't need more things to feel satisfied.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. My core values are at the forefront of my actions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I am under considerable financial stress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. There is a lot of wasted effort in my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. I experience a sense of meaning in my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. I buy only the things I clearly need.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I stay on top of the things I have to remember.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. I make time in my life to nurture myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I feel like I am contributing to society.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I have made many wasted purchases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Appendix C**  
**DRAFT**

**Simple Living Measurement Scale**

	Very Untrue	Somewhat Untrue	Slightly Untrue	Slightly True	Somewhat True	Very True
	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. My living space feels good to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. I avoid financial debt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. I consider the environment when I make purchases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. I use most of the things that I own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. I make time in my life to nurture others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Most days I am clear about my purpose in life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. I get sidetracked when I try to accomplish something.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. I can see what the distractions are in my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. I am mindful about the belongings I add to my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. My life is focused on achieving goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix D: Personal Story Summaries and Discussion Starters

### Resolving Dramatic Challenges

#### THE PHOENIX RISING (J. Eva Nagel)

As a successful woman, Eva's world is dramatically turned upside down by a house fire, which leaves her with a heightened appreciation for her core values.

Discussion Starters: The author talks about changes, some that sneak up on you, others that hit you over the head. Have you experienced this kind of dramatic change? What effect did it have on your life perspective? On your sense of satisfaction?

#### THE GLAMOROUS LIFE (Todra Payne)

Todra knew what it meant to experience a life of glamour that many people can only aspire to. As it did for many of us, September 11th forced her to step back and reassess her life choices.

Discussion Starters: Did you find yourself reevaluating your life or society after September 11th? Did you make any promises to yourself at the time? Did you keep them? What is a good balance between a lavish and a frugal lifestyle?

#### TO WALK A FINE LINE (Michael Beck)

An awkward conversation on a date got Michael thinking about what was enough for him. Later, a work crisis threatened his health, forcing an intense reevaluation of what was enough, what was important.

Discussion Starters: Have you experienced any relationships that started your own mental wheels turning about what is enough? Any work dilemmas or crises that started a similar process? Have you ever experienced a conflict between your material wealth and your well-being?

#### A BREATH OF LIFE (Tamsen Butler)

Tamsen's son had a medical crisis that opened her eyes to what is really the most important way to spend time with her children.

Discussion Starters: Have you experienced medical threats or crises that have led you to rethink your priorities or your sense of life satisfaction? Have you ever found yourself so overscheduled that you needed to reevaluate your commitments?

## Discovering the Sanity Within

### FOREST SOLITAIRE (Andrew Vietze)

After a great deal of thought, Andrew made a radical career change that led to higher satisfaction but also some very real challenges.

Discussion Starters: Have you ever wished for or considered a career change of your own? What is your take on what benefits or sacrifices might come with a change like this? How can your dreams best guide you?

### IGNORING WALDEN (Katherine Hauswirth)

Katherine strives to avoid radicalism in her quest for simplicity, preferring a much more gradual approach.

Discussion Starters: What do you view as too radical when you consider concepts like being satisfied with enough and living more simply? What changes in this direction feel comfortable to you?

### LOSING AND WINNING (Galen Warden)

Galen talks about financial hardship, but also about the subjectivity of financial value.

Discussion Starters: What does the term financial hardship mean to you? What is the real meaning of money in your life? Do you have any thoughts on how financial value can be driven by superficial principles?

### DOWNWARD MOBILITY– How I Stepped off the Ladder (Brian Simkins)

Brian eventually felt trapped by the cycle of success and higher and higher promotion, especially when he was confronted with the effect it had on his family.

Discussion Starters: Have you ever felt trapped by success? By expectations? What made/would make you feel freer? What is a happy balance between work and family commitments?

## **“Unstuffing” One’s Life**

### MORE IS LESS – Confessions of a Clutter Queen (Liz Milner)

Liz talks about the love for many objects and the ideas they represent, and also about the courage to throw out the trash.

Discussion Starters: Have you accumulated more than you want or need in some areas of your home? Why has this happened? What would you like to change?

### REMEMBERING THE POWER (Jon Myhre)

Jon’s clutter created chaos and confusion, and clearing it made a significant and lasting difference.

Discussion Starters: What kinds of habits and feelings does clutter create in your life? What are some first steps to reducing clutter (physical and otherwise)? What are some of the rewards of doing so?

### MOVING INTO FOCUS (Stephanie Barton)

Stephanie moved repeatedly, each time also moving closer to a better sense of what she needed.

Discussion Starters: What lessons have you learned when you moved, in the preparing, packing, and unpacking? Has the experience of moving ever altered your perspective on satisfaction and priorities?

### MAN ON A MISSION (Fred Ecks)

Over time, Fred found a way to live much more frugally, and with more exhilaration, than he even had previously.

Discussion Starters: What does living frugally mean to you? What adjustments seem possible to you? What changes might it enable? How could it improve your quality of life?

## The Wonderment of Enough

JUST ENOUGH (Derek Donald Hambrick)

When Derek's income in the airline industry took a skydive, his attitude on what defines enough made a major difference.

Discussion Starters: How do you define having enough? How would you cope if your financial situation changed suddenly? What do you think of voluntary changes that increase simplicity and help you recognize what may already be enough?

TOOLITTLE, TOOMUCH, and ENOUGH (Bob Hinschläger)

Bob talks about a "loaded" question: How much do you want, and how does it affect your well-being?

Discussion Starters: What do you want? What is too much for you? Too little? Enough? What are the warning signs that you've gone from just enough to too much?

TRADING CALIFORNIA FOR KENTUCKY (Teena Hammond Gomez)

A dramatic change in location and an expansion of space made a big difference in Teena's quality of life.

Discussion Starters: Have you experienced or thought about a dramatic change in your location or your environment? What benefits or drawbacks have you experienced (or might you experience) as a result?

A KEY TO ENOUGH (Ruth Pittard)

Ruth made a conscious decision to pare down dramatically, and she approves of the results.

Discussion Starters: Have you considered paring down? On what? Responsibilities? Possessions? What does paring down mean to you—both positive and negative aspects?

## **Cruising to Satisfaction**

### SMALL MOMENTS (Beth Herndon)

Beth talks about the stress of her job, but also about the lessons that it provides. She explores the importance of stress relief, often in the form of contact with nature.

Discussion Starters: How do you handle the stresses of your day to day life? What strategies help you to reestablish your equilibrium? What elements from everyday life around you can help to renew your spirit?

### THE ECONOMICS OF TIME (Erik Richardson)

Erik offers a refreshing take on economic theory. He talks about the value of time and about using our time to get more time for the satisfaction of enough.

Discussion Starters: What are your thoughts on the value of time? How much of your time do you feel is wasted? When does time seem well spent to you? Do you think leisure time can be an investment?

### SIMPLICITY IN THE CITY (Emily Houston)

Emily's move from country to city provoked a lot of thoughts on what was enough for her. Each location provided some benefits as well as some challenges.

Discussion Starters: Could you find satisfaction in the country as easily as in the city (or vice versa)? What elements of satisfaction remain the same for you, whatever the location?

### THE BRASS RING (Steven Fisher)

Steven has experienced wealth as well as debt, and emphasizes recognizing what is enough before a crisis hits. He emphasizes the need to question what our wants, needs, and goals are.

Discussion Starters: What are your thoughts and feelings on debt? Have you thought about your own wants, needs, and goals and how they connect with your finances?

**Appendix E: Suggested House Party Checklist (Feel free to add or subtract as you see fit.)**

1. Plan interested attendee list
2. Send out invitations at least 2 weeks ahead, requesting RSVP 1 week ahead
3. Acquire copies of book at least 1 week ahead
4. Finalize food plans (eg, potluck from guests or a dish you prepare) 1 week ahead
5. Finalize music and decor plans 1 week ahead
6. Prepare handouts (eg, quotes from book, information on SLA, Draft Simple Living Measurement Scale) 1-2 days ahead
7. Send attendees reminder 1-2 days before party
8. Set up environment (including books, handouts, seating) and food for guest arrival 1-3 hours ahead of party
9. Follow party with thank you that includes possible follow-up resources and/or future get-together ideas